PARENT/STUDENT GUIDE

WELCOME

The purpose of this parent guide is to outline the philosophy, expectations and the regulations that guide the day-to-day operation of our school. If you have any questions or there is a need for further clarification please contact the school by phone (403-500-2116) or in person.

It is our belief that the task of educating our students can only be accomplished by continued cooperation between home and school within a framework of mutual respect and participation. The staff of Saint Sebastian School looks forward to your continued interest, support and involvement.

THE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Sebastian Elementary School is a Christ-Centred community dedicated to the virtues of love, service and commitment, like our patron. All members are encouraged to reach their full potential in the academic pursuit of knowledge and truth, with the understanding that we are all called to stewardship.

THE DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Living and learning in our Catholic Faith.

OUR PATRON – SAINT SEBASTIAN

Sebastian was born at Narbonne, in Gaul, and raised by his parents in Milan, Italy. It is reported that he possessed great physical endurance and had a natural inclination to military life. He became a soldier in the Roman army in Rome in approximately the year 283. Emperor Diocletian later named Sebastian captain in the Praetorian guards, unaware that he was a Christian. Sebastian was actually a faithful follower of Christ and by 286 used his position in the Praetorian Guard to assist Christian confessors and martyrs in their suffering. At the time, the Roman army was ruthlessly participating in the persecution of Christians while Sebastian was secretly committing many acts of love and charity for those persecuted.

Sebastian is known to have encouraged two Roman martyrs, Marcellian and Marcus, under sentence of death, to remain faithful to Christ. During this time he is also known to have converted many Romans to Christianity and cured others of sickness, through his strength in faith alone.

Once it was discovered by Emperor Diocletian that Sebastian was a Christian, he was sentenced to death by being shot full of arrows by the Mauritanian archers. Being left for dead, Sebastian openly criticized the Emperor for his persecution of Christians and was executed by being beaten to death. He is reported to have died on January 20, 287.

Sebastian was one of a class of military martyrs and soldier saints of the Early Christian Church. He is a patron saint of athletes because of his physical endurance and energetic way of spreading and defending the faith. He is also a patron to all soldiers. The feast day for Saint Sebastian is January 20.

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF CARING

We are a Catholic Community of Caring. This philosophy embodies everything that we do as followers of Jesus Christ. We focus upon the virtues of: Respect, Responsibility, Caring, Trust, Faith and Family. These virtues are incorporated within school plans, curriculum integration, conflict resolution and resiliency programming. Routines, events, activities and celebrations will be scheduled throughout the year for the purpose of strengthening a Catholic culture and climate within our school community.

Many of these activities will be delivered through the organization of students into Big Family Groups (BFG), which are multi-age, multi-grade groupings of students. The purpose of these groupings is to develop a greater sense of community and a culture of caring within the hearts of all students.
**BELL TIMES**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Gr. 1-6</th>
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<tr>
<td>First AM Bell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes Begin</td>
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<td>Lunch Break</td>
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<td>PM Entry Bell</td>
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<td>Classes Begin</td>
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<td>PM Dismissal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Dismissal (Christmas/Easter)</td>
<td>11:29 am</td>
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**LEARNING COMMONS**

Our Learning Commons houses an extensive collection of books and other resources for students and teachers. It has an automated system for tracking all resources.

All classes, kindergarten to grade 6, have regularly scheduled periods, with Grades 1 to 6 borrowing books on a weekly basis. Students are taught skills at their appropriate grade levels so that they can enjoy maximum use of the Learning Commons.

Should any books or materials be lost or damaged, students will be expected to reimburse the school.

**DIVERSE LEARNING TEACHER**

This position supports classroom teachers and students in grades 1-6 identified by Alberta Education coding. Support is provided in conjunction with the homeroom teacher and within the framework of the Alberta Education Program of Studies.

A key component of this support is the development and implementation of the Learner Support Plan (LSP), which guides teachers, parents and the diverse learning teacher during the year as they deliver the instructional program. The LSP, developed each fall with parental involvement and student input, is intended to be a working document that is consulted, evaluated and adapted on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Consistent and ongoing evaluation of the LSP determines whether a need exists for adjustments, revisions and/or additions to the intended goals and outcomes.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

The school district has a team of specialists consisting of a psychologist, social worker, and counsellor who are available to assist the school in planning for special needs of students who are experiencing learning or emotional problems.

**SCHOOL RESOURCE TEAM (S.R.T.)**

The School Resource Team is comprised of selected staff. The team works to broaden the effectiveness of our student services program as a vehicle which helps address students’ difficulties. The S.R.T. considers each case and recommends appropriate strategies for academic, emotional and behavioural support.

**CALGARY HEALTH REGIONAL AUTHORITY SERVICES**

Our school is eligible to receive occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech and public health services. All services are generated through a school-based referral system that requires parental support. Parents are requested to respond immediately to inquiries by the school or CHRA staff in order to ensure optimal service.

The public health nurse’s responsibilities are to promote the physical, emotional, and social well-being of our school community through a variety of preventative and protective health programs. The school nurse will also be coordinating the Grade 5 Hepatitis B and HPV vaccination programs and checking the vaccination status of kindergarten and grade 1 children. The public health nurse works with the school community to provide the following services:

- Control of Communicable Disease
- Referral and Consultation
- Health Education
- Health Promotion

The school nurse can offer screening procedures, such as hearing and vision at students’ or parents’
request. Parents can consult with the nurse and refer assessment of health-related concerns.

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP

**HOT LUNCH HELPERS/LISTENING PROGRAM/ RECYCLING/INTRAMURAL HELPERS**

Each of these programs provides an opportunity for students to share their gifts and talents in a way that supports our school community. Students are invited to join in the fall and carry their commitment throughout the school year. **This is an excellent opportunity for students to grow through leadership.**

**Hot Lunch Helpers** assist with the service and distribution of lunches ordered through Healthy Hunger program. **Listening Program** helpers read over the public address system information about various artists and groups, to start every afternoon along with a sampling of music. **Recyclers** assist with separating, identifying and counting juice and pop recyclable materials. This eliminates waste going into the landfills, plus puts money back into school programming for students. **Intramural Helpers** will support the planning, organizing and scoring of all intramural events.

### SCHOOL PATROLS

The members of the patrol units are grade 5 and 6 students who are given an opportunity to develop and practice leadership skills. They will strive over the year to show and expect safe and courteous traffic safety behaviour to enable all students a safe passage to and from school. Patrols operate before school beginning at 8:30 am and after school starting at 3:15 pm for fifteen minutes.

### CLUBS

**Student Clubs** are many and varied, offered throughout the course of the school year. Some clubs revolve around specific seasons. Examples of clubs offered include: Choir, Hand bells, Computer Animation, Art Club and Division I Computer Club. Club opportunities will vary from year-to-year and students are encouraged to participate in as many clubs as possible. These opportunities contribute greatly to the very fabric of our school community.

### LUNCH SERVICES

#### REVERSE LUNCH

A **reverse lunch** involves changing the order of the lunch recess; with the free play portion happening first and the lunch second. In practical terms, students will be dismissed at 12:05 pm to go outside for free playtime, or remain inside for various clubs. A bell will ring at 12:30 pm to signal students’ return into the school. Students then enter the school, gather their lunches from lunch bins and eat in the gym in class groupings, from 12:35 pm – 12:50 pm. At 12:50 pm, the regular entry bell sounds and students are collected from the gym by their teachers.

Students going home for lunch are encouraged to return to school 5 minutes prior to the bell. They are to enter the school through the front door and proceed to the gym.

Parents are requested to develop an understanding of the reverse lunch program and help to educate your children throughout the school year.

Students MUST remain on the school grounds if they bring their lunches and they will not be allowed to leave unless they are signed out at the office by a parent. Students who do leave will not be able to return to the gym to eat their lunch that day. The cost for the Lunch Room Program will be determined at the beginning of each school year. Please refer to the School Fee Sheets distributed in September.

### CONCESSION

A variety of healthy snacks will be available through the concession. Healthy snacks will include: yogurt tubes, cheese strings, fruit cups, granola bars and seaweed chips. There will also be some occasional offerings like ice cream cups and freeze pops. Concession cards are available for $15.00 through the office so parents do not need to send money.

### STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As members of a Catholic Community of Caring, we should be guided by the gospel values of loving God and our neighbour as ourselves. This simply means
treating other people the same way we like to be treated – with dignity, respect and love.

When I am RESPECTFUL
- I use appropriate language
- I show proper conduct
- I work quietly and do not disturb others

When I am RESPONSIBLE
- I clean up the messes I make
- I am honest when I make mistakes
- I do my homework with my best effort
- I use school property with care
- I keep the school grounds clean

When I am TRUSTWORTHY
- I do not bully
- I act responsibly when not directly supervised
- I am a peacemaker
- I help those who are hurt or need help

When I am CARING
- I give compliments to others
- I include people when they are being left out
- I think about other students’ feelings

When I treat everyone in the school community as FAMILY
- I show kindness to others
- I am willing to share
- I cooperate with others
- I help others feel safe and secure

When I am FAITHFILLED
- I follow God’s word
- I model my faith
- I show prayerful behaviour during celebrations

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

As a Catholic School District, the goal of our Dress and Appearance code is to provide a positive and safe learning environment that will reflect decency, modesty and respect. Students’ dress and appearance shall be appropriate for educational activities and not cause a disruption to the educational process.

Specifically, but not limited to:
- Emblems, printing/writing on shirts, jackets and headwear shall be in harmony with Catholic values and beliefs.
- Shorts and skirts shall be in good repair and of appropriate length.
- Appropriate footwear shall be worn at all time.
- Clothing, jewellery or accessories which create a safety or health concern, or cause, or threaten to cause disruption to the educational process are prohibited.

Specifically, the following are prohibited:
- Midriff shirts, halter tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts.
- Heads should not be covered with anything (ie: ball caps, bandannas, scarves, handkerchiefs)

Students not complying with the Dress and Appearance Code will be asked to change into more appropriate attire. It will be viewed as defiant behaviour if the student repeatedly violates the Dress and Appearance Code. Consequences, as outlined in our school’s Progressive Discipline Plan shall range from a verbal reminder to a suspension from school.

The dress code reflects the values of our school community.
### PHYSICAL EDUCATION GYM STRIP

For safety, hygiene and appearance reasons, proper physical education attire is **compulsory** for all students in Grades 4, 5 and 6.

### PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN

**BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS**

The school’s primary goal is to educate, NOT TO DISCIPLINE.

However, when the behaviour or action of an individual student comes into conflict with the rights of others or themselves, and when individual students refuse to comply with defined expectations, corrective actions are necessary for the benefit of that individual and for the benefit of the school as a whole. Pursuant to School Board Policy, physical, racial, sexual or any form of psychological harassment or abuse will not be tolerated. Parental involvement is a required component of serious corrective actions.

Appropriate consequences for students who do not follow the Code of Conduct guidelines include the following progressive discipline process:

**Step 1. Informal discussion with appropriate staff member**

When a situation arises, the student is asked why he/she behaved as he/she did. Staff members will try to get the student to explain why the behaviour was wrong by using the Community of Caring values as a guide. Students will be encouraged to brainstorm possible solutions/alternatives for more appropriate behaviour.

**Step 2. Conference with the staff member**

If the situation recurs, it is important to have the student explain the reasoning behind the behaviour. It is also important for the staff member to stress the seriousness of the situation and its impact on everyone: the individual, the class, the school, other students…etc. At this stage, it is made clear that more serious consequences will be in place for continued negative behaviours (lunch detention, missed recess, community service). Parents may be contacted.

**Step 3. Restriction of privileges**

For a third infraction, students are denied the opportunity to participate in recess or lunch and are assigned a detention or some form of community service. Depending on the circumstances of the situation, other preventative measures that involve school or district resources may be implemented. At this stage, staff members will consult with administration to discuss an appropriate course of action. Parents will be contacted and a Conduct Report form will then be sent home to document this behaviour.

**Step 4. Parent Conference**

For serious or repeated offences, a conference may be held amongst the student, parent, and teacher. During this conference, an agreement must be reached as to how the behaviour will be corrected. In addition to meeting with parents, consequences may also be given, which may include restriction of privileges as noted above. At this point the option of a behavioural referral may be explored.

**Step 5. Suspension**

Suspension from school is the final action available and occurs only after all else has failed or if a serious transgression occurs. Students will be given either an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension at the discretion of administration. The need for an expulsion can only be discussed between the principal and the area superintendent.

**Bullying occurs when:**

- A person is the target, over time, of repeated negative actions
- One person has more power, so the person being victimized cannot defend him/herself
- A person, who is the target, may feel embarrassed, hurt, scared and/or angry

Unacceptable bullying behaviours include the following:

**Physical Aggression:** pushing, shoving hitting, spitting, punching, kicking, or threatening

**Verbal Aggression:** mocking, name calling, teasing, use of inappropriate language, verbal threats of aggression

**Indirect/Psychological:** gossiping, embarrassing someone, rumours, stealing, playing mean tricks, purposely excluding from group, witness bystander.
SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SUPervision BEFORE SCHOOL

Outside supervision of students will begin at 8:35 am before school in the morning. Students should not arrive on school property before this time. Students will not be allowed in the hallways or classrooms before school begins. They will have access only to the boot rooms and the washrooms.

In the event of inclement weather, students will be permitted to enter the school through their regular recess doors at 8:35. In these circumstances they will be brought into the gym and supervised before the school day begins.

RECESS AND REVERSE LUNCH BREAKS

All children are to go outdoors at recess and during the lunch recess, except during inclement weather. Inclement weather is when outside conditions are extremely cold, extremely windy, or when there is a heavy rainfall. District policy stipulates that students will remain indoors if weather conditions reach -18°C, including wind chill. All decisions about going outside will be made by administration prior to recess/noon break. Please ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the weather as they will be outside for recess and the noon hour.

Please reference the section on Attendance regarding students who are ill or injured.

INSIDE SNACKS

This plan is very much like the snack program that occurs in Kindergarten. Students in grades 1 through 6 will be invited to eat their snacks approximately 10 minutes ahead of or after the morning recess at 10:40 a.m. No snacks will be permitted outside. Students will be educated on the Inside Snack and Reverse Lunch initiatives by their classroom teachers and through our assembly periods. Inquiries or questions of clarification about the reverse lunch or inside snack programs can be directed to the school office or your child’s classroom teacher.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school on time except when ill or a family emergency prevents attendance. A parent must notify the OFFICE by email or phone before 8:50 am. or 12:55 pm. when a student is absent, tardy or on vacation. If a parent does not call, the school will call to assure student’s safety.

Regular school attendance is vital to the academic success of our students. To that end, it is important that home and school work together in supporting students in regular attendance.

If a student is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to report the absence to the SCHOOL OFFICE. Based on the information supplied by the parent, the school must decide whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

A STUDENT’S ABSENCE IS EXCUSED IN THE CASE OF:

- **Illness** – A student is too ill to attend school, or he/she is contagious.
- **Suspension** – Students who are formally sent home for a period of up to five (5) days.
- **Expulsion** - Students who are expelled from school following school board policy.
- **Unavoidable Cause** – Students who may be unable to attend school as a result of one of the following reasons:
  - Specialist visit
  - Court appearance
  - Accident
  - Death/or serious illness in the family
  - Medical appointment
  - Administrative (students who are sent or given permission to go home with administrative approval)
  - Other – to be discussed with administration

AN ABSENCE IS UNEXCUSED IN THE CASE OF:
• **Truancy** – Student is away without parental permission
• **Unknown** – Student is absent and there has been no contact with parent/guardian
• **No Acceptable Reason** – Student is excused by parent and no legitimate reason is provided
• **Vacation**

In regards to vacations during the school year, we strongly recommend that parents schedule these during regular holiday times, such as Christmas, Easter and summer break. **Be aware that vacation absences are unexcused absences.** It is unreasonable to expect that when a student misses school for an extended period of time, they will be able to ‘catch up’ in all areas when they return.

When emailing or calling the attendance phone line, please state:

1. Name of student (spell the last name).
2. Length of absence.
3. Reason for absence. If no reason is given the student will be marked as unexcused.
4. Student’s homeroom teacher.

Alert the office to sickness/allergies or other physical conditions.

**WHEN TO SEND A SICK OR INJURED CHILD?**

This is always a difficult decision. On one hand, a student’s continuing attendance makes for optimal learning. On the other hand, if a student is in such an infectious state as to threaten the health and safety of other students and staff, then it is best to keep the child at home. Colds, influenza, pink eye, measles, chicken pox, mumps, slap cheek and pediculosis (head lice) are all examples of illnesses or conditions that need to be quarantined during their most contagious periods. Some of these conditions can also be quite serious for expectant mothers, so please err on the side of caution by keeping your children at home until they are healthy enough to return to school.

Please also be considerate of the school’s supervision capabilities when contemplating whether your child is well enough to attend school. Making requests for children to come to school under the condition that they must stay inside for recesses, is **extremely difficult to accommodate.** Planning, class preparation, extracurricular activities, supervision duties and professional meetings are all part of a teacher’s daily schedule. The office is also an extremely busy place throughout the day, making the supervision of a sick child an “unsafe added responsibility.” A general rule of thumb is that, **children who are well enough to attend school are well enough to go outside.**

Parents of students who have experienced a serious physical injury, such as broken bones, dislocations, concussions or recent surgeries, are requested to contact the office, as well as the homeroom teacher so that we may be able to plan short or long term accommodations during periods of recovery.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Students who live more than 1.2 km from school may qualify for charter bus transportation. Inquiries regarding bussing should be made to the school office at 403-500-2116. **Please be aware that a mandatory transportation user fee is will be collected each year.**

Parents are requested to contact the office whenever students aren’t taking the charter bus. This is for safety purposes.

**LOST AND FOUND**

Please label all of your child’s belongings. Anything left lying around will be found in the school’s Lost and Found. Occasionally we will pack up all the items and send them to a charity. Please keep all valuable items at home.

**RECORD KEEPING**

Student files and school records must be kept up to date. If missing items are noted (i.e. baptism dates, etc.) you will be requested to supply the information. **PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL OF ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER and EMAIL CHANGES.** Parents’ work telephone numbers and emergency numbers must be kept up to date.
COMMUNICATION

Regular communication between home and school is important to student progress. Progress Reports are sent home three times per year. Progress Report marks are an indication of where your child’s learning is at. They are not a punishment or reward. Formal parent-teacher conferences will be held in order to facilitate better communication between home and school on your child’s progress. Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate whenever concerns or bouquets should be shared. Please contact the school to arrange an appointment if you wish to meet with a teacher or email that teacher directly.

**Newsletters are emailed home** on a monthly basis at the beginning of the month. Additional notices and updates may be **e-mailed** home when warranted. Parents are asked to pay close attention to the information contained in all of these communications. **If you are not on our email list, please call the school office to be added to the distribution list.**

**Agendas** are sent home daily. Please read and sign them every day to find out what is happening.

**School Website:** Parents are encouraged to make it a practice to review our school’s web site for information updates.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE** can be used to “Report an Absence”. Send an email to the office and your child’s teacher regarding attendance and vacation absences

STUDENT AGendas

Every student in grades 1 – 6 will be required to purchase an agenda. The cost of agendas will be incorporated into the fee sheet to be distributed at the beginning of the school year.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Administration of **medication to students** can only be facilitated under the authority of the attending doctor and parents and with the appropriate documentation in place at school. **Forms are available** at the office and circumstances should be discussed with school administration. Students who suffer from severe allergic reaction are recommended to carry an epi pen (in a pouch) with them at all times. It is also highly recommended that “medic alert” bracelets be worn for all severe medical conditions.

STUDENT BElongings

**Cell phone use** in school is prohibited. Although cell phones are an effective tool in monitoring child safety, they are not allowed out of a student’s backpack during school hours.

Any **items confiscated** from students, should be picked up by parents through the classroom teacher or the office.

INTERNET USE

All students and staff are required by the Calgary Catholic School District to sign and follow the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) before gaining computer access. This form is available in the opening day start-up package.
BICYCLES and SKATEBOARDS

Students who bring bicycles and skateboards to school do so at their own risk and expense. Bicycles are to be placed in racks. Students should have a helmet and a quality bicycle lock for their own safety and security. Students are to walk their bicycles and skateboards on school property.

FIELD TRIPS

All field trips approved by the school or the district are considered as a co-curricular part of the school program and all students are expected to participate in these trips. If for some reason your child is unable to participate, parents are asked to communicate this reason to the teacher. The cost of field trips is included in school fees.

Should assistance be required for transporting children in private vehicles, parent volunteers providing transportation will be required to complete a Volunteer Transportation Authorization Form. All drivers must complete this form illustrating insurance requirements. We strongly advise parents to obtain accident insurance for their children at the beginning of the school year. The school will cooperate in sending application forms for accident insurance home with the children.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If your child becomes acutely ill or is seriously hurt at school, a staff member will make every effort to contact you at home or at work. Should these efforts fail, we will attempt to contact the “emergency contact” person you gave us. Failing this, if we evaluate the situation as serious enough, we will call 911 and have your child transported to the hospital by ambulance. The district carries insurance which may cover the cost of an ambulance.

SCHOOL VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS & PARENTS

All visitors to the school MUST report directly to the office. Those people visiting the school or volunteering must then sign in at the office and receive a visitor tag. This tag is to be worn visibly until the visitor/volunteer signs out at the end of his/her stay. Volunteers are an integral part of a school's educational process and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Please note that district policy requires that parents who volunteer for the school MUST have participated in a Volunteer Orientation at the school.

Please follow these guidelines:
1. Please report at the main office to sign in and put on a volunteer tag.
2. Please respect your child's freedom while volunteering. He/she may feel restricted or embarrassed if additional attention is given by a parent.
3. Please refrain from discussing students and their problems outside the school environment. Confidentiality is important.
4. Please make child care arrangements for your younger children while you are volunteering in the school.
5. Please abide by the district's no smoking policy.

Parents seeking meetings with teachers, however short in length, are to phone ahead and request an appointment. Teachers cannot meet with anyone at bell times or during instruction time.

SCHOOL FEES

School fees for 2015 - 2016 are as follows:

Kindergarten Fees - $ 90.00

General/Extended School Fee (Gr.1-6) - $ 95.00
Noon Supervision Fee: Single Child - $ 80.00
Family - $160.00

All field trips are covered through the Activity Fees collected in September. Parents are requested to pay all school fees by cheque made payable to: Saint Sebastian School. Online fee payment is strongly recommended. District policies regarding accountability for funds collected by the school as well as the ability to connect students with lost payments makes this request imperative.
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Saint Sebastian School has a very active School Council. All parents and school staff are members of the School Council. The main role of the Council is to help set and to provide support for the goals of the school and to represent the concerns of the parents in matters pertaining to the education of their children. The Council meetings are usually held once a month at the school.

VOLUNTEERS

Active and visible parental involvement in the school is an important part of the educational process. The quality and variety of school programs have been enhanced by the many talents and gifts of our school volunteers. More importantly, parents who volunteer send several very clear messages to their children: “I care about you even while you are at school.” And “School is very important.”

Parent volunteers help to build successful programs and self-confident students. The staff invites you to share your talents and time through our volunteer program.

PARENTAL ROLES IN ACADEMICS

CAN PARENTS HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT?

THE HOME IS THE PRIMARY EDUCATING INSTITUTION!

- Hold daily positive conversations about school with your child.
- If we look for problems and imperfection, we will find it and encourage and expand it by drawing attention to it.

WE FIND WHAT WE LOOK FOR...LOOK FOR IMPROVEMENT NOT PERFECTION

Try these questions!

- What did you learn today that might be useful for the rest of your life?
- What did you do today that made you feel proud?

- Did you go out of your way to help someone today?
- What were some of the challenges that you faced today and how did they make you a better person?
- Why was today an exciting day?

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN

If you have a concern about something that is or is not happening in your child's classroom there is an established process which is used at all levels of our district's administrative structure.

1. Make an appointment to see the teacher involved.
2. If further discussion seems necessary, talk to an administrator.
3. If the situation is still not resolved, the zone superintendent may be notified.

Should you inadvertently “skip” a step, you will be referred back to the preceding level.

GENERAL ACADEMIC INFORMATION

REPORTING PROGRESS

There will be an oral reporting conference held by appointment with parents in the first part of the school year. This will be followed by two formal written progress reports and parent/teacher conferences in November and March. The fourth and final written progress report will be issued in June at year's end.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Provincial examinations are written in May and June by grade six students. These exams help evaluate program effectiveness and direct decisions regarding future changes in teaching and learning across the province. Grade six tests in Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science. Grade 5 students in Calgary Catholic take a Religion Achievement Exam as well as complete three projects demonstrating their competency in the grade 5 Religion program.
Students in grade four and six are also required to write the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT) by mid-November.

**PROMOTION POLICY**

Parents will be made aware of a student experiencing difficulty as early in the school year as possible. Promotion is based primarily upon a student's satisfactory achievement of grade level skills. If a student experiences extreme difficulty academically, teacher(s) will dialogue with parents before a decision is reached.

**CLASS PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS**

The making of class lists is a collaborative effort. Much care and thought are given to the placement of students into classes. Each student is individually considered before placement. Teachers and administrators are particularly careful when selecting students for combined grades classes. We look closely at a student's work habits, ability to work independently, ability to focus attention, group relationships, interpersonal skills and overall achievement.

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

Kindergarten registration for the next school year is accepted on the first day of school. This is an on-going process that continues throughout the year. Please note that the order of registrations received is the basis for determining AM and PM placements.

**HOMEWORK**

“Homework is any task assigned by teachers that students complete during non-school hours.” (The Canadian Council on Learning: A Systematic Review of Literature Examining the Impact of Homework on Academic Achievement, 2009. P. 5)

The Calgary Catholic School District recognizes meaningful, carefully-planned homework can support student success and be a complementary part of a student’s overall learning program. The sections listed below are taken from the Calgary Catholic School District’s Homework Policy, which can be accessed in its entirety through: www.cssd.ab.ca.

**Types of homework:**
- **Practise** – reviews & reinforces skills and concepts already taught.
- **Completion** – work assigned during the school day that is not completed in class.
- **Enrichment** – extends learning beyond curriculum expectations; through activities such as completing research related to a student’s interest.
- **Project** – when additional time outside of the school day is required to complete an extensive assignment.

**Scheduling and Quantity Considerations:**
- Designed & differentiated to meet students’ learning needs.
- Engages students.
- Links to work undertaken in class.
- Recognizes the importance of family time.

**Time Guidelines:**

When using the guidelines listed below, it is important to keep in mind that the same homework assignment may require different amounts of time to complete, depending on each student’s abilities and skills.

**Kindergarten-Grade 3 (Division I)**
No formal homework, but 5-10 minutes of activity per school night with a focus on literacy, language and learning tasks that occur in meaningful contexts; for example reading or discussion of experiences.

**Grades 4-6 (Division II)**
Formal assignments in various subject areas will not exceed 10-30 minutes per school night, with a continued focus on reading and meaningful review.

It is important to recognize that teachers, students and parents have roles and responsibilities inherent to ensuring that homework is meaningful and carefully-planned through its primary purpose to support student success.
HOLIDAY HOMEWORK

It is strongly recommended that parents schedule vacations during regular holiday times, such as Christmas, Easter and during the summer. Please be aware that vacation absences are unexcused absences and must be reported as such. It is unreasonable to expect that when students miss school for an extended period of time, due to vacation planning, that they will be able to “catch up” in all areas when they return. No amount of teacher planning can reproduce direct instruction in the classroom. Teachers will not prepare advance homework for students that will be absent due to vacation.

In the case of absences over three days and more, students will be required to participate in activities that support the core program subjects of Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science. Journal writing, reading and practice of mathematics skills fall into this category. The amount of time spent on the practice of skills, concepts and studying varies according to a student's individual needs.

The most valuable home study activity for students is 20 minutes of daily, uninterrupted reading. This is a standing home study assignment for all students at Saint Sebastian. Home study can only be a benefit with the assistance and cooperation of the parents. Your efforts in this area of your son's/daughter's education is greatly needed and appreciated. The Saint Sebastian School Agenda is designed to help facilitate home study. Every child in Grades 1 – 6 will be purchasing one.

Homework suggestions:
1. Help schedule a time to do homework. Show that homework is an important priority and that you value it.
2. If possible, provide a quiet corner for your child to work.
3. Help set up this area so that there is good lighting and appropriate materials to work with (pencils, a ruler, a dictionary).
4. Let your child work independently, but let him/her know that you are available to help.
5. Be aware that there is a difference between being a resource and consultant and hovering over a child with constant advice.
6. Be available to check work, if needed, and to check whether the assignment has been completed.
7. If possible, help your child see how this particular assignment or skill relates to everyday life and life skills.
8. Remember, nothing can help your child as much as a hug, a smile and a few words of approval. Be encouraging, positive and supportive. Your attitudes are contagious.
9. Sign the agenda to indicate homework is completed.

SUCCESSFUL PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The first reporting session will be an Oral Report. It is designed as an information sharing session. The following are guidelines that you can use in preparation for this Oral Report. Be as open as possible in discussing your child.

PREPARE FOR THE MEETING

Check with your child to see if there is anything he or she would like you to discuss with the teacher. Jot down your own questions.

INFORMATION THAT YOU CAN SUPPLY

- How the child finds school
- Any health problems or special sensitivities (such as weight or speech difficulties)
- How the child behaves at home
- What the child's responsibilities are at home
- What discipline he/she seems to respond to best
- The child's favourite pastimes
- Problems that the child has and special areas where the child needs help
- Strengths that the child shows at home
- The child's future plans
- Any usual events or incidents that have occurred at home which may be contributing to a problem at school

Formal Parent/Teacher Conferences are held after the 2nd and 3rd reporting periods. Here are some helpful suggestions to make both formal and
informal conferences more meaningful to your child's success.

**ASK QUESTIONS**

If you have any concerns, mention them. Now is the time to get all the facts about a school situation you may only know second-hand.

**LET THE TEACHER KNOW YOU WANT TO HELP**

Research has demonstrated that parental involvement is a key to quality education. If there's a problem, discuss strategies you can try at home and at school to address it. Set up a follow-up meeting or phone call. If there are no problems, why not ask the teacher to suggest activities for improvement or enrichment?

**INVOLVE YOUR CHILD**

Be sure to discuss the meeting with him or her. Stress the positive points the teacher made and discuss the teacher's suggestions for improvement.

**FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE AGREED UPON PLAN**

Feel free to call the school if you want to check on your child's progress or if you would like to set up additional meetings with the teacher.

**CONFERENCE SCHEDULING**

The school will have conferences scheduled online through the Saint Sebastian Conference Manager. They are an internet based conference managing service that will do scheduling for the oral conferences (September 2015), and written conferences (December 2015 & March 2016). More information and instructions will be sent home prior to each conference session.

**SAFETY POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

**SCHOOL PARKING LOT**

Our philosophy at Saint Sebastian School is "Safety before Convenience". In the interest of children's safety, the school parking lot is **Out of Bounds** to all non-school board vehicular traffic. Parents picking up and dropping off students should do so along Chaparral Drive and Chapala Drive naturally, rules pertaining to the Passenger Loading Zone need to be adhered to. Please don't park in the "bus stop" area. In addition to being dangerous to the safety of our students, it is against traffic law to block a crosswalk at any time for any purpose.

**PASSENGER LOADING ZONE**

A Passenger Loading Zone is located along Chapala Drive on the east side of the street, adjacent to the school grounds and creative playground. The Zone is situated between the crosswalk at Chapala Crescent and the asphalt path located at the north end of the creative playground. The area will cover approximately 7 vehicle lengths and will be in effect form 8:30 am – 9:30 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm on school days ONLY. The goal of this Zone is to increase access for vehicles picking up and dropping off students at Saint Sebastian School.

There is a **2 minute time limit** for vehicles that are stopped in this zone. It is absolutely necessary that drivers refrain from parking in the Passenger Loading Zone. A **parked vehicle** is one that is left unattended for any period of time. Parked vehicles impede access to this 7 vehicle zone causing disruption to drop-off and pick-up procedures.

All other parking spaces outside of the Passenger Loading Zone will be open for parking as usual. This is especially true for parents dropping off or picking up Kindergarten students. Please be considerate of our neighbours on the west side of Chapala Drive, respecting all traffic bylaws, especially pertaining to parking and encroachment of driveways.

**SAFETY PATROL CROSSINGS**

There will be three crossings serviced by our Safety Patrols: 1) in front of the school, closest to the parking lot, crossing Chaparral Drive, 2) at the corner of Chaparral Drive and Chapala Drive, crossing Chapala Drive and 3) at the corner of Chapala Drive and Chapala Crescent, crossing Chapala Drive.
Please also be aware Safety Patrollers will monitor access to the school (staff) parking lot to ensure safety for pedestrians and staff vehicles.

**FIRE DRILLS/INTRUDER ALERT**  
*(Lockdown)*

FIRE DRILLS/INTRUDER ALERT *(Lockdown)*

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FIRE DRILLS/INTRUDER ALERT *(Lockdown)*

FIRE DRILLS/INTRUDER ALERT *(Lockdown)*

First Drill: 
Second Drill: 

Fire drills are practiced on a once-a-month basis. Parents are reminded that they are expected to participate in a fire drill if in the school at the time the alarm sounds. Teachers will make students aware of proper procedures so evacuation of the school becomes an orderly, panic-free exercise. It is imperative that students have a pair of indoor shoes. They will not have time to put on their outdoor shoes during the fire drill and consequently will have to go outside in their stocking feet. Lockdowns are practiced at least twice a year. The first drill is announced to students and parents while the second is unannounced. These lockdowns are conducted to ensure orderly procedures if an emergency situation were to arise.

**SCHOOL ACCESS**

For the safety and protection of students, all school doors, with the exception of the main entrance, will remain locked throughout the day while classes are in session. The Division II boot room entrance will be opened at 8:35 am, at recess and during the lunch recess. If your child arrives late, he/she must enter through the front doors and check in at the office. While we recognize that these door closures might cause some inconvenience, we feel that the security benefits for your child are well worth it.

Front Door Access to the school is restricted to visitors, district personnel and parents. Students are not permitted to access the front door unless they are fulfilling a specific role at the school (safety patrols, choir or hand bells) are accompanied by parents or are arriving late. Visitors and parents must sign in at the office before proceeding further into the school.

**PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

Following are a number of safety guidelines the District has outlined for elementary playgrounds:

1. No pushing.
2. No running on playground equipment or when conditions are unsafe.
3. Take turns.
4. No fighting.
5. If someone is injured, report this to the playground supervisor immediately. **DO NOT MOVE THIS PERSON.**
6. No throwing of stones, sticks, snowballs or other objects that may cause injury.
7. No chewing gum during active play (choking hazard).
8. Students are NOT PERMITTED to bring food or drink outside during the AM recess or the lunch recess (see “Inside Snacks and Reverse Lunch Program”)

**INSURANCE COVERAGE**

In the fall, voluntary student Accident Insurance forms will be sent home for parents who wish to purchase insurance for their children.

My parents and I have read and discussed the Saint Sebastian School Handbook.

Signature of Student:

_____________________________

Grade/Class: ________________

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

_____________________________

Date: ________________
### Important Dates 2015-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2015</td>
<td>28 Friday</td>
<td>Teacher Start Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2015</td>
<td>1 Tuesday</td>
<td>First day of classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Monday</td>
<td>Labour Day- No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17/18 Thursday/Friday</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Conferences (No school on Friday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>9 Friday</td>
<td>Professional Development- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Monday</td>
<td>Thanksgiving- No school</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>11 Monday</td>
<td>Remembrance Day- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 Wednesday</td>
<td>Remembrance Day- No school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26/27 Thursday/Friday</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Conferences (No school on Friday)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30 Monday</td>
<td>Professional Development- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2015</td>
<td>18 Friday</td>
<td>Christmas Break- Noon dismissal</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>4 Monday</td>
<td>Schools re-open</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 Friday</td>
<td>Professional Development- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2016</td>
<td>11/12 Thursday/Friday</td>
<td>Parent/Teacher Conferences (No school on Friday)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15/16 Monday/Tuesday</td>
<td>Family Day- No School/ Professional Development- No School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2016</td>
<td>24 Monday</td>
<td>Professional Development- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2016</td>
<td>4 Monday</td>
<td>Schools re-open</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25 Monday</td>
<td>Easter Break- Noon Dismissal</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>20 Friday</td>
<td>Professional Development- No School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23 Monday</td>
<td>Victoria Day- No School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>28 Tuesday</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29 Wednesday</td>
<td>Teacher Organization a.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>